

Vital Signs

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Vital Signs



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ORGANIC ABSTRACTION
FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

LISA PHILLIPS

NEW YORK 1988
WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

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Frontispiece

MICHAEL LEKAKIS (1907–1987)

Sympan, 1960

Oak, 85 × 28¾ × 21¾ inches, with base

Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 61.33

Foreword

The Permanent Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art contains the most comprehensive record of the development of twentieth-century American art. We are fortunate to be able to draw on this vast resource to organize frequent temporary exhibitions which reveal current and past achievements in American art. These presentations also attest to our active acquisitions program and to the Museum's historical importance in the development of American art.

The richness of the Permanent Collection enables us to present not only chronological overviews but thematic developments as well. In "Vital Signs: Organic Abstraction," Lisa Phillips makes use of the Permanent Collection to highlight the contemporary concern of American artists with interpretations of nature and to document antecedents of this movement in art of earlier periods.

Like so much of our work at the Whitney Museum, this exhibition builds upon the pioneering efforts of my predecessor, John I. H. Baur, whose scholarship was so much a part of the Museum during the thirty-five year period from 1952 until his death in 1987. Jack's exhibition "Nature In Abstraction" (1958) was the inspiration for Lisa Phillips' reinterpretation of this theme.

After closing at the Whitney Museum, "Vital Signs" will travel to several other American museums under the auspices of the National Committee. Through such traveling exhibitions, our Permanent Collection can be enjoyed by a wide audience. We also hope, however, that with the urgently needed expansion of our present facilities, the Whitney Museum will soon be able to provide the public on a continuing basis with a chronological installation of outstanding twentieth-century American art emphasizing our great strengths.

Tom Armstrong
Director



BILL JENSEN (b. 1945)

The Meadow, 1980–81

Oil on linen, 22 × 22 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Wilfred P. and Rose J. Cohen Purchase Fund 81.36

Since the century began, artists have persistently looked to nature as a generative force for abstraction, developing a vocabulary of organic forms based on the observation of the physical world. This impulse has been identified as one of the cornerstones of American modernism, one rooted in an indigenous, pantheistic reverence for nature as well as in certain nineteenth-century scientific ideas that were given a new voice by turn-of-the-century philosophers. Nineteenth-century biologists, for instance, commonly espoused the theory of Vitalism, which held that matter is inert until impregnated by a metaphysical force which engenders and sustains life. Henri Bergson (*Time and Free Will*, 1889; *Creative Evolution*, 1907) adopted this concept of impregnated matter, comparing it to the sculptor's uncut stone. In his view, the artist must imbue his materials with this life force, or *élan vital*, to make art. Though scientific developments increasingly pointed toward a mechanistic understanding of life, Vitalism remained a powerful metaphor for the artistic act of creation, growth, and transformation.

The Symbolist aesthete Charles Henry proposed a related philosophy—that certain forms and forces in nature corresponded to psychological states. Combining his interests in the biological and the perceptual, he advocated a psycho-physical aesthetic and exalted the dynamic, complex curves and organic line characteristic of Art Nouveau.

Art Nouveau's flowing contours and sinuous lines symbolically represented the forces of growth in nature. Certain elements—the vine, stem, and bud in particular—were exaggerated and cultivated into intricate, webbed designs of energized lines and sexual charge. The sensuality and emblematic character of simplified natural forms also appealed to Symbolist painters seeking kinesthetic effects, and later to Kandinsky in his spiritually infused, nature-based abstractions. In nature these artists found an effective antidote

to the grim materialism and depersonalization of the mechanized age. Nature offered a vast repository of forms to be explored for their expressive and formal possibilities. The inventory was almost endless, and continued to expand with each ensuing scientific development. The technologies of photography, microscopy, and telescoping, to name a few, extended the normal range of human vision, revealing new worlds of amorphous and geometric forms not previously apparent.

Important scientific studies published at the turn of the century were also a tremendous stimulus to artists. The epoch-making *Kunstformen der Natur* (*Art Forms of Nature*), published in 1899 by the German Darwinian biologist Ernst Heinrich Haeckel, was a precisely illustrated study of lower forms of life, presented in a way not ordinarily observed or perceived. Amoebae, jellyfish, and other fragile undersea specimens were shown, sometimes microscopically, in a visually abstract system that emphasized their symmetry, transparency, and geometric structure. Soon after, in 1917, another illustrated study appeared: D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's seminal tract *On Growth and Form* demonstrated that form and function are linked through geometry; his mathematical analysis of cellular formations, morphological development, and spiral structures provided rational access to unseen worlds. He used the structural logic he found in natural forms to counter the belief that only technology could claim rational order.

Our understanding of the visible world continues to evolve from these earlier twentieth-century treatises. Consequently, the legitimacy of the terms we use to describe this world needs to be continually reevaluated. Something that appears "abstract," for example, may in fact be a representation of a real form in an unfamiliar state. Similarly, the term "organic" is most frequently associated with plants and animals. In art, it typically denotes biotic, botanical, and biomorphic

configurations, as opposed to "geometric" ones. But, as we now know, living matter is composed of particles that can often be geometrically described. A Nautilus shell or a honeycomb is both organic and geometric. There are also organic forms in the non-natural world: biological and geometric models fuse in machine forms and in organized systems such as information or electronic circuit theory, cybernetics, and systems analysis. It is clear that what we now need is an expansive definition of organic, one that refutes both the notion of a stringent boundary between nature and culture and the archaic dichotomy between the organic and the geometric. Only then will we be able to follow the development of organic abstraction in America—how each generation has responded to our changing understanding of the natural world.

In the first decades of the century, Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, and Joseph Stella arrived at a unique form of abstraction, using nature as a departure point for formal invention and spiritual exploration. Steadfastly opposed to the literal depiction of nature, they instead abstracted certain elements and fragments from it. Less linear and florid than Art Nouveau, the radiating lines, sensuous curves, soft folds, and spiky tendrils in their paintings are seen up close, as if magnified by a telephoto lens, and then cropped like a photograph (pp. 12, 13, 15). Mining the expressive potentialities of organic shape, they found in these close-up extrapolations symbolic equivalents for emotional states and used the sensuality of nature and its elemental rhythms to animate their work. Their perception of the vitalist life force became an effective paradigm for the dynamic aspiration of their burgeoning, independent modern style.

One of the few sculptors working in a modernist vein early in the century was French-born Robert Laurent, who came to America in 1910. In his carved wood sculpture *The Flame* (p. 14),

the quivering rhythms of fire and plant life flow forth, seemingly liberated from the living material of the wood itself. The volume of the sculpture appears fluid, and as such represents a significant departure from the traditional construction of sculpture around a solid, central core or "skeleton."

Advanced aesthetic ideas from Europe began slowly filtering into America after the 1913 Armory Show, but did not make a major impact until the 1930s. It was the mechanomorphism of Fernand Léger that particularly appealed to the American mind. Léger's abstractions fused the natural and mechanical worlds and perceived the human body as a hybrid of the two. Thus the slick surfaces and hard edges of Charles Biederman's and John Ferren's paintings suggest the transmogrification of plants and figures into eviscerated, metallic, machine-tooled surfaces (pp. 18, 19). The shapes often appear "constructed"—cut-out, arranged, and then illusionistically collaged together against a monochromatic field.

George L. K. Morris and Alice Trumbull Mason likewise used amorphic forms that retained a hard-edged, constructed feeling. Their wavy, free-form compositions, further animated by dots and dashes (pp. 16, 20), have strong affinities with the works of artists in the French Abstraction Création group, in particular with the linear fantasies of Joan Miró and the "concretions" of Jean Arp.

Morris, Mason, Biederman, and Ferren were all founding members of a group called the American Abstract Artists. This exhibition society and lobbying group, formed in 1936 to promote the acceptance of abstract art in America, was vitally important in fostering a hospitable environment for the developing vanguard. Their conception of abstraction was broad enough to embrace free-form expression, constructivist precision, and neo-plastic purity, and many of the artists consciously merged these styles to produce new organic hybrids.

Stimulated by reproductions of Julio Gonzalez's

welded sculpture, Ibram Lassaw, a founder of the AAA, began to experiment with sheet metal and a welding iron, producing such works as *Sculpture in Steel* (p. 23), an open, rectilinear space frame containing totally abstract, curving forms. One of the most advanced American sculptures of its time, it proposed an alternative to the traditional methodologies of carving and modeling.

Alexander Calder, already an internationally recognized artist in the 1930s, was similarly merging the organic with the constructivist, using mechanical means to expand the limits of invented form and to incorporate literal motion. By the late thirties, both Calder and Lassaw had gravitated toward a free-form, expressive, Surrealist idiom known as biomorphism—simplified, smooth, and rounded forms that suggest the internal organs of living things (p. 22).

Biomorphism emerged from a cluster of ideas about nature, automatism, mythology, and the unconscious. The evocative amorphic shapes produced by psychic automatism were thought to provide direct access to the unconscious. Therefore, the Surrealists regarded the “biomorph” as their primary symbol for the unconscious, and it became an integral part of their lexicon. As an emblem it signified primordial fears and desires, territories beyond the reach of consciousness and the naked eye. The visceral lyricism of biomorphism and its obvious bodily allusions were clear transmitters of psycho-sexual states. Furthermore, biomorphism held a mythic attraction: the crowded, swarming, squirming forms in an apparent state of instability and flux provided a glimpse into the process of becoming, into the spectacle of creation.

Many Abstract Expressionists—Arshile Gorky, Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, William Baziotes, and Adolph Gottlieb—appropriated the biomorph in their Surrealist-inspired works of the 1940s. Gorky, for one, shared the Surrealists’ recognition of the “simultaneity of nature”—that is, the full range of the life processes

encapsulated in any given moment, whether seeding, decaying, or regenerating. Gorky’s *Study for Summation* captures that spectacle of life in its mutations and startling hybrids of “soft organisms, insidious slits and smudges, intestinal fists, pubic discs, pudenda and multiple limb folds.”³ His polymorphous, abstract narratives of emotional incidents (p. 26) have a gothic, somewhat sinister edge not unlike the fantastic grotesqueries of Bosch. The sense of constant metamorphosis and transmutation suggests the work’s own continuing morphological development, that is, the process of artistic creation.

In contrast to the vitalist belief that some essential truth or spirit is embedded in nature, the Abstract Expressionists viewed nature and its rhythms as reflections of the self—and the self as an extension of nature. This attitude is evident in Gorky’s often repeated statement, “I do not paint in front of but from within nature,” and most succinctly summarized in Jackson Pollock’s memorable line, “I am nature.” It was in probing the mysteries and enigmas of nature that the unexplored regions of the mind could be expressed and liberated.

Transparent marine forms in a watery field figure in the primordial imagery of Rothko and Baziotes. The tenuous equilibrium between the form and its environment and the delicate line used to describe that membranous boundary is yet another metaphor for the tension between the inner mind and outer world. In their intimation of a primal scene, these works correspondingly imply the fragile genesis of artistic creation.

The process of creation is also made manifest in the teeming calligraphic fields of Bradley Walker Tomlin, Pollock, Mark Tobey, and Ad Reinhardt (pp. 35–38). Each shape and brushstroke becomes an organic entity—a physical extension of the morphogenic process of nature. The sense of revelation previously extracted from nature seems transferred to the paint itself. The pulsing, rhythmic movements of these

abstract calligraphic works issue from the artists' mystical, metaphysical connection to the natural force within, an almost Zen identification with the cosmos. Zen and other Oriental philosophies, influential in artistic circles at the time, included not only organisms but the elemental forces of gravity, light, atmosphere, electronic fields, and lunar and seasonal cycles in their totalizing concept of nature.

In sculpture, new methods of metallurgy allowed for a more spontaneous, expressive surface treatment as well as an exploration of open shapes that ushered in a new wave of baroque permutations of biotic models such as roots, branches, pods, shells, and flowers. The viscosity of molten steel and the aleatory effects of intense heat were cultivated to mirror the random and asymmetrical aspects of organic matter. Sensual yet repellent, the textured surface further extended the metaphor of nature to suggest an oozing, scorched, and excoriated skin—a surface implying simultaneously a living restlessness, and death or decay. These works, like Theodore Roszak's *Thorn Blossom* (p. 31), were intended as "blunt reminders of primeval strife and struggle, reminiscent of those brute forces that not only produced life but in turn threaten to destroy it."⁴

Also during the 1950s, advancements in nuclear physics, molecular biology, and space travel significantly expanded the realm of the imaginable. The imagery of DNA, satellite photographs, and atomic energy ignited hopes, fears, and uncertainties about scientific advances; they seemed to hold both a promise for survival and a real threat of extinction.

The ellipses darting across the field of Larry Poons' *Untitled* (p. 46) have an atomic, electronic charge, while those in Richard Anuszkiewicz's *Inner Red* (p. 45), with their squirming energy, could represent microscopic cellular activity. Both artists have used the repetition of a simplified shape to suggest organic movement and to produce, with the aid of complementary colors, in-

tense optical effects that provoke visceral, somatic sensations.

As artists moved away from spontaneous expressionism in the late 1950s, the extreme reduction of form into discrete, legible shapes became prevalent. Isolated, emblematic, organic forms occupy a central position in the studied abstractions of Ellsworth Kelly, Jack Youngerman, Myron Stout, and George Sugarman (pp. 47–50). A far cry from the improvisatory works of the previous generation, these pieces have carefully refined compositions with distilled shapes, sensual contours, and immaculate surfaces. Figure and ground, organic and geometric, are held in charged equilibrium. Although the artists' close attention to forms in nature undoubtedly helped determine their highly ordered repertoire of shapes, there is a diminishing interest in natural reference. Instead they extend the possibilities of abstract shape, inventing forms to evoke sensations of light, atmosphere, and space, as well as the fundamental organic structure of art itself—its integrated coordination of surface and support, its own "skin and bones."

Late modernists, seeking to de-romanticize art, emphasized its ontological process. As the mechanics of a work's making became paramount, the parameters of the art object were redefined and the range of materials and procedures was expanded to an unprecedented degree. Art could result from arranging stones, throwing molten lead, filling a room with dirt, knotting a soft material, encasing air, or marking the earth with motorcycle treads. Organic materials were frequently used to signal the effects of time—weathering, stress, corrosion, condensation, growth—and the disorder of natural forces again became a paradigm for art making.

Disillusioned with the deleterious effects of technology, artists once more found in nature a powerful source of energy. Some, like Michael Heizer and Robert Smithson, went directly to the land for their material content, reforming,

re-shaping, and transposing it. In Smithson's Non-sites (p. 54), geological matter from strip mines, waste areas, and industrial sites was reclaimed and presented as an artifact of technology's source material—disordered and jumbled within a highly ordered steel container. Other works that deliberately merged the biological and technological, the natural and the artificial, include John Chamberlain's passionately organic assemblages of automobile parts, Lynda Benglis' voluptuous, twisted forms, and Alan Saret's atmospheric tangles of wire (pp. 51, 56, 57). In every case the process of "forming" is made patently visible.

It would seem that in the last ten years there has been a spirited reengagement of overtly natural forms in abstract painting and sculpture. Although in one sense this reengagement can be seen as a rapprochement with early modernist art, upon closer inspection it is clear that this recent work is heavily indebted to the procedural clarity of late Minimalism and Post-Minimalism. In fact, the imagery chosen is often integrally connected to the revelation of process. The iconography of cellular formations and elemental plant forms in Terry Winters' work came out of an investigation of the natural pigments he was using in his early, imageless abstractions (p. 62). Carroll Dunham found a useful starting point for his imagery in the organic patterns and inflections of the wood veneer that formed his painting surface (p. 65). In *Step Falls* (p. 67), Bryan Hunt conflates the literal image of flowing molten bronze with the arrested motion of an abstracted waterfall.

As in the past, organic forms are valued for their range of sexual, biological, and technological allusions. John Newman and Robert Therrien cultivate an intentional ambiguity in their work between biology and technology (pp. 61, 63). Nancy Graves forms her sculpture from a compilation of natural and man-made cast objects (p. 66). These confluences come at a time when nature itself has become a product of our consumer

world—parceled into "preserves," packaged as "parkland"; when genetic engineering and the detection of new and fatal viruses have refocused our attention on the interior scene of the body; when non-Euclidian and fractal geometry propose irregular and fluctuating surfaces as a new model of reality.

Today, the once optimistic ideal of linear progress has been abandoned as we seek to counter the destructive side effects of technological advancement. In art, as well, the notion of forward progress has been replaced by a new model of invention, one borne of antithetical forces that create friction, irresolution, ambiguity, and fluctuation. It is within this dynamic tension that artists must work, seeking some consolation in the metaphors of growth, eroticism, and personal identity that the natural realm provides.

Lisa Phillips
Associate Curator

Notes

1. See John H. Bair, *Non-sites: Abstracted The Relations of Abstract Painting with Structures to Nature in Twentieth-Century American Art*, exhibition catalogue (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1958); Kynaston McLeine, ed., *The Metropolitan Museum of Art: American Painting 1800-1950*, exhibition catalogue (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1976).

2. See Jack Allgren, *Charles Hays and the Formation of a Psycho-physical Aesthetic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

3. Harold Rosenberg, *Art and Gorky: The Making of the Idea* (New York: Horizon Press, 1962), p. 106.

4. Ryszak, quoted in *The New Sculpture: A Symposium*, transcript, 1962, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, p. 18.



GEORGIA O'KEEFFE (1887-1986)

Abstraction, 1926

Oil on canvas, 30 x 18 inches

Purchase 58.43



ARTHUR G. DOVE (1880-1946)

Pearl Fish, 1915

Pastel on canvas (7 1/4 x 23 1/2 inches high)

Purchase with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Roy P. Neuberger, 150/20



ROBERT LAURENT (1890–1970)

The Flame, c. 1917

Wood, 18 inches high

Gift of Mr. Bartlett Arkell 42.1



JOSEPH STELLA (1877–1946)
Tropic of Cancer (1920–21)
 Oil on canvas, 48 x 29 inches
 Purchase: \$3.63



GEORGE L. K. MORRIS (1905–1975)

Indian Concretion, 1938

Oil on canvas, 45 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 36 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches

Gift of Mr. Jerry Leiber 84.70.1



GEORGE L. K. MORRIS (1915-1975)
Catharsis 1936
Bronze 22 1/2 x 12 x 5 1/2 inches
Gift of Mr. Jerry Leslie 18139



CHARLES BIEDERMAN (b. 1906)

Painting, New York, January 1936, 1936

Oil on canvas, 51 1/4 x 38 1/4 inches

50th Anniversary Gift of the John I. H. Baur Purchase Fund and the
Wilfred P and Rose J. Cohen Purchase Fund 80.17



JOHN FERREN (1905–1970)

Composition with Curve, 1936

Origin larva, 29 x 19 inches

Purchase with funds from the Friends of the White, Museum of
American Art, 1985

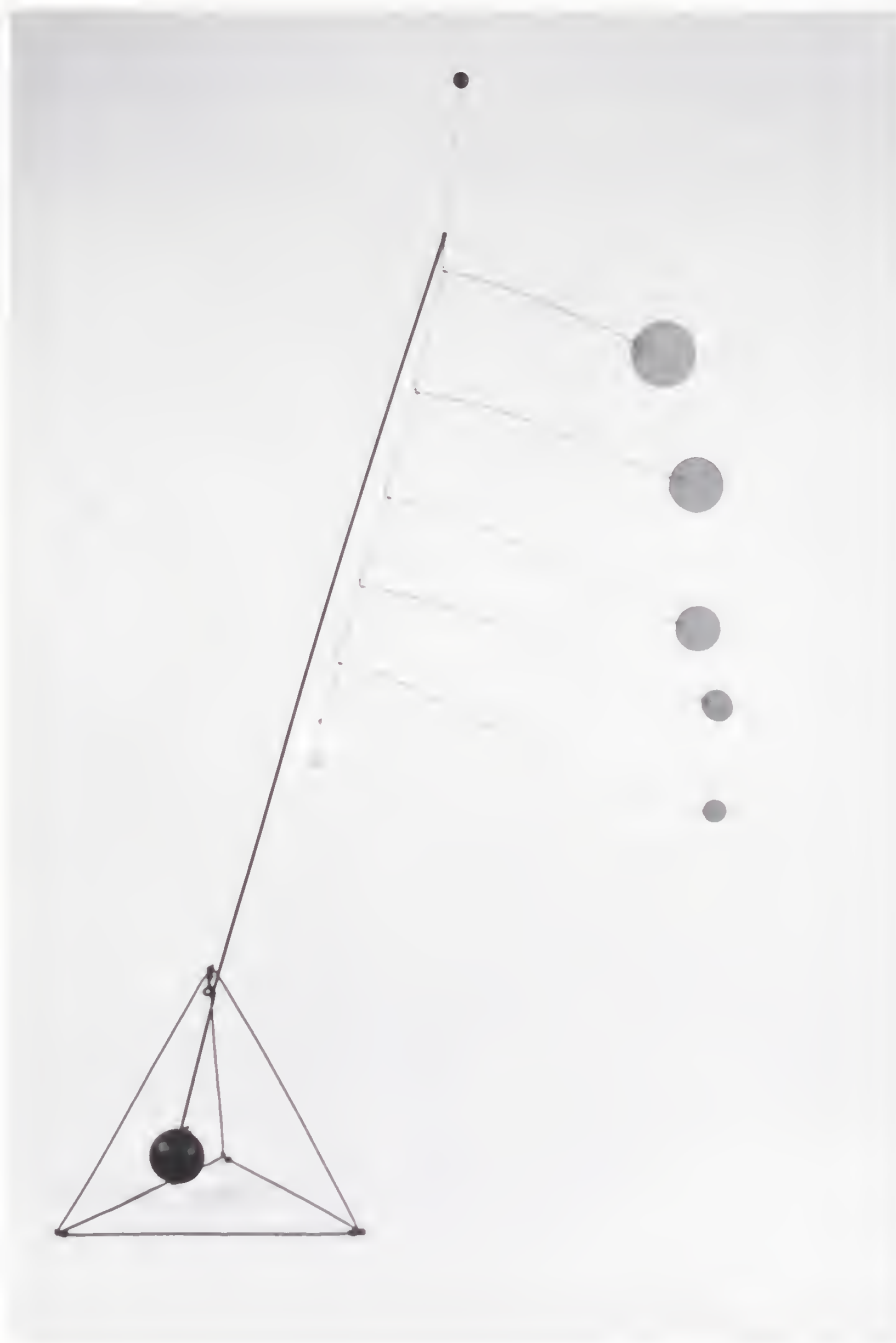


ALICE TRUMBULL MASON (1904–1971)

Free White Spacing, 1939

Oil on linen, 22 × 27 1/4 inches

Gift of Emily and Wolf Kahn 75.49



ALEXANDER CALDER (1898-1976)

Orderly Ball 1972

Painted steel rod, wire, wool and thread, aluminum, brass, soft vinyl
 approximately 69 1/2 x 33 x 47 1/2 inches

Provenance: with funds donated by Mrs. Peter Lind, Purchase Fund, 83.49



ALEXANDER CALDER (1898–1976)

Wooden Bottle with Hairs, 1943

Wood and wire, 22 x 14½ x 10½ inches

50th Anniversary Gift of the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 80.28.2



ABRAM LASSAW, *Untitled*, 1938

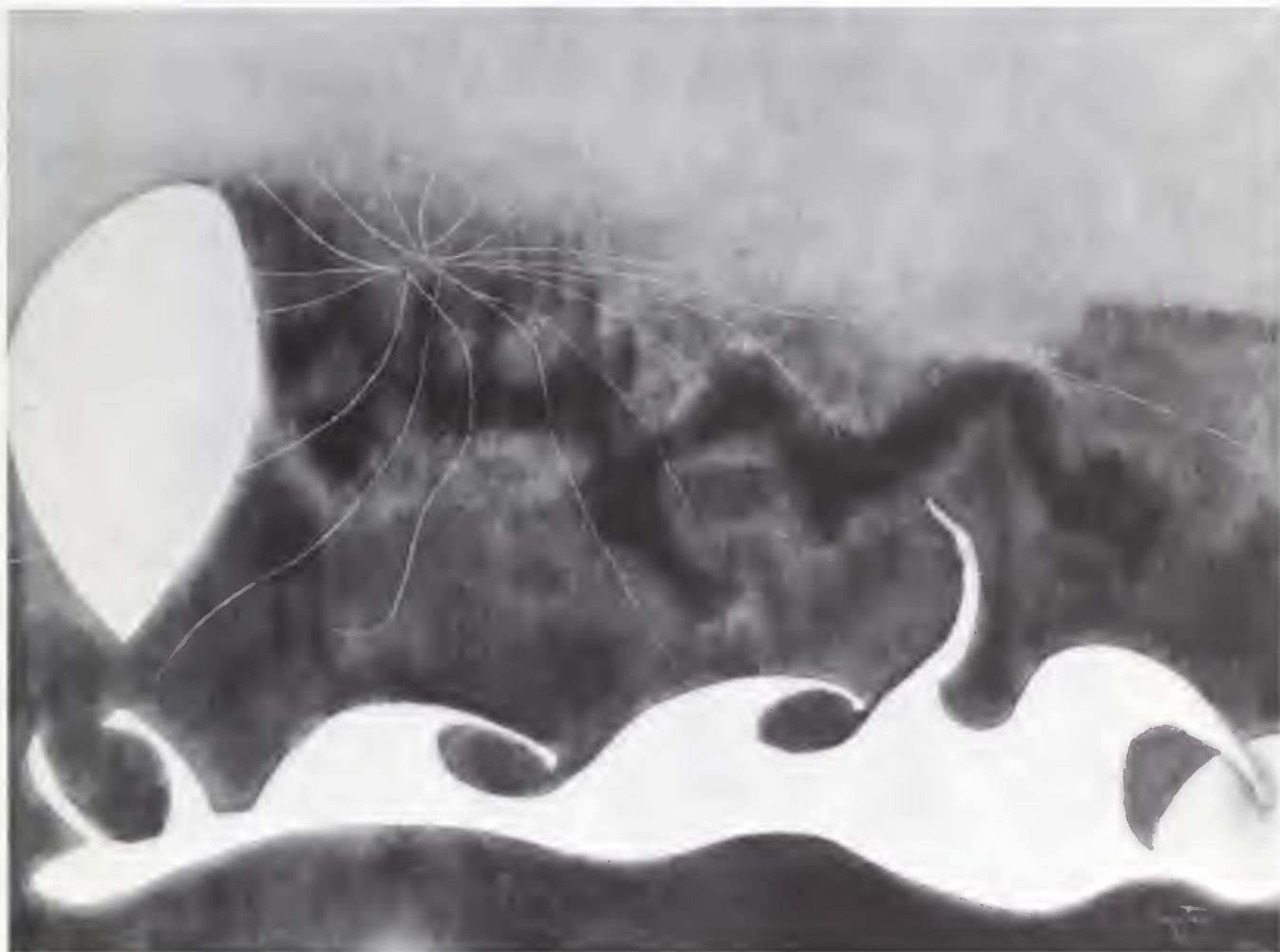
Sculpture, steel, 1938

Steel, 18 1/2 x 21 1/2 x 15 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee, 1961



MARK ROTHKO (1903–1970)
Baptismal Scene, 1945
Watercolor on paper, 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 14 inches (sight)
Purchase 46.12



WILLIAM SAZDOWITZ (1912-1961)
 Tide Breeze (1955)
 Oil on canvas, 46 x 48 inches
 Purchase: \$612



ARSHILE GORKY (1904–1948)

The Betrothal, II, 1947

Oil on canvas, 50¾ x 38 inches

Purchase 50.3

(not in the exhibition)



YVES TANGUY (1900-1955)
 Tit. W. 1944
 O. or. 16 x 28 cm.
 Kay Sage Tanguy Request. 6. 46.



CLYFFORD STILL (1904–1980)

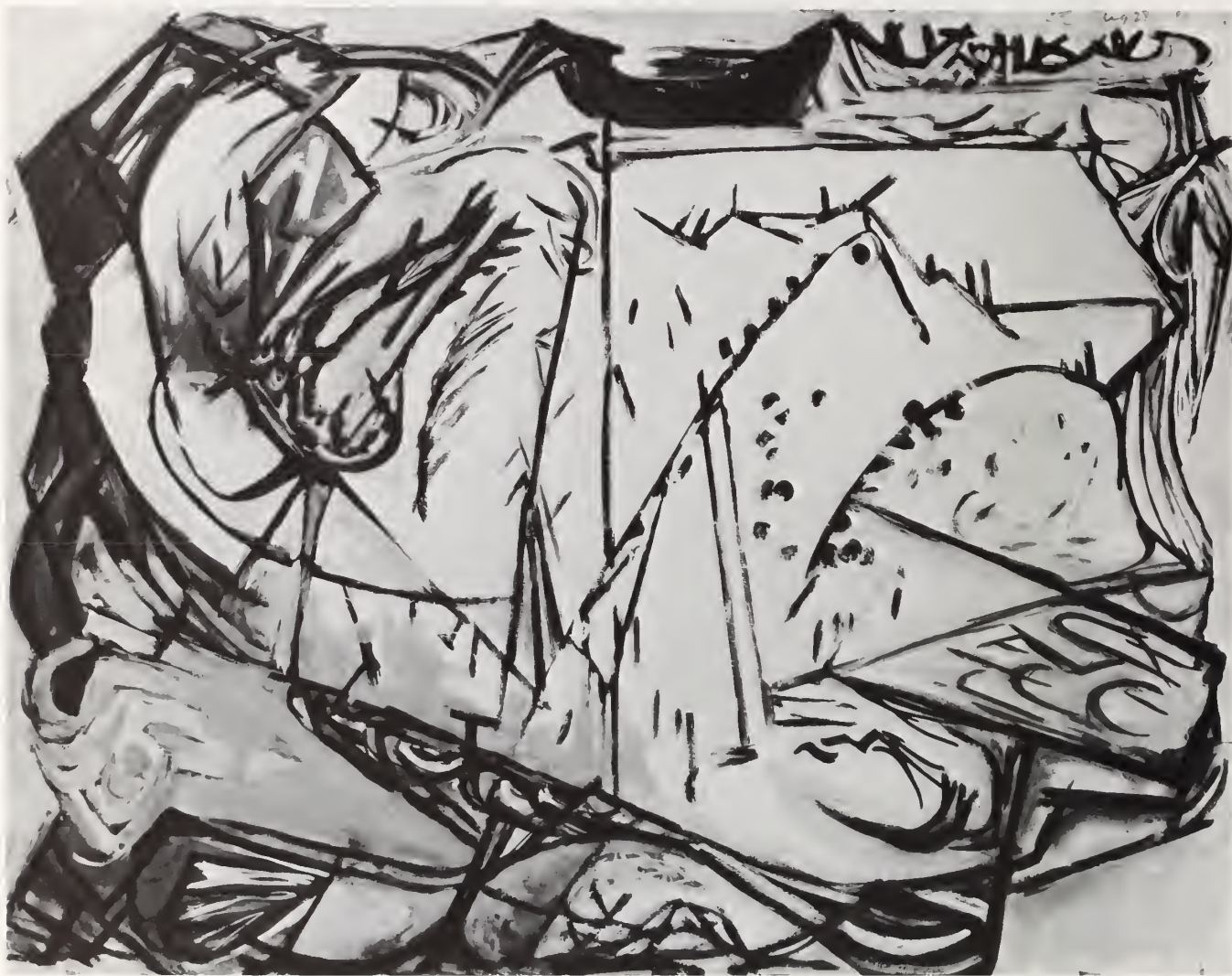
Untitled, 1945

Oil on canvas, 42 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 33 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Friedman 69.3



LOUISE BOURGOIS *Potted Plants* 1981
 Green and Black, 1981
 Potted plants (P) 11 x 20 x 18 inches
 (28 x 51 x 46 cm)



DAVID SMITH (1906–1965)

Untitled, 1951

Ink and tempera on paper, 19¾ x 25¾ inches

Promised 50th Anniversary Gift of an anonymous donor P.7.79



THEODORE ROSZAK (1907-1978)
Thirst Blossom, 1948
 Steel and nickel-silver, 34 1/2 inches high
 Purchase 48.6



ISAMU NOGUCHI (b. 1904)
The Ring, 1945–48
Black granite, 12 × 12 × 22 inches
Gift of the artist 69.106

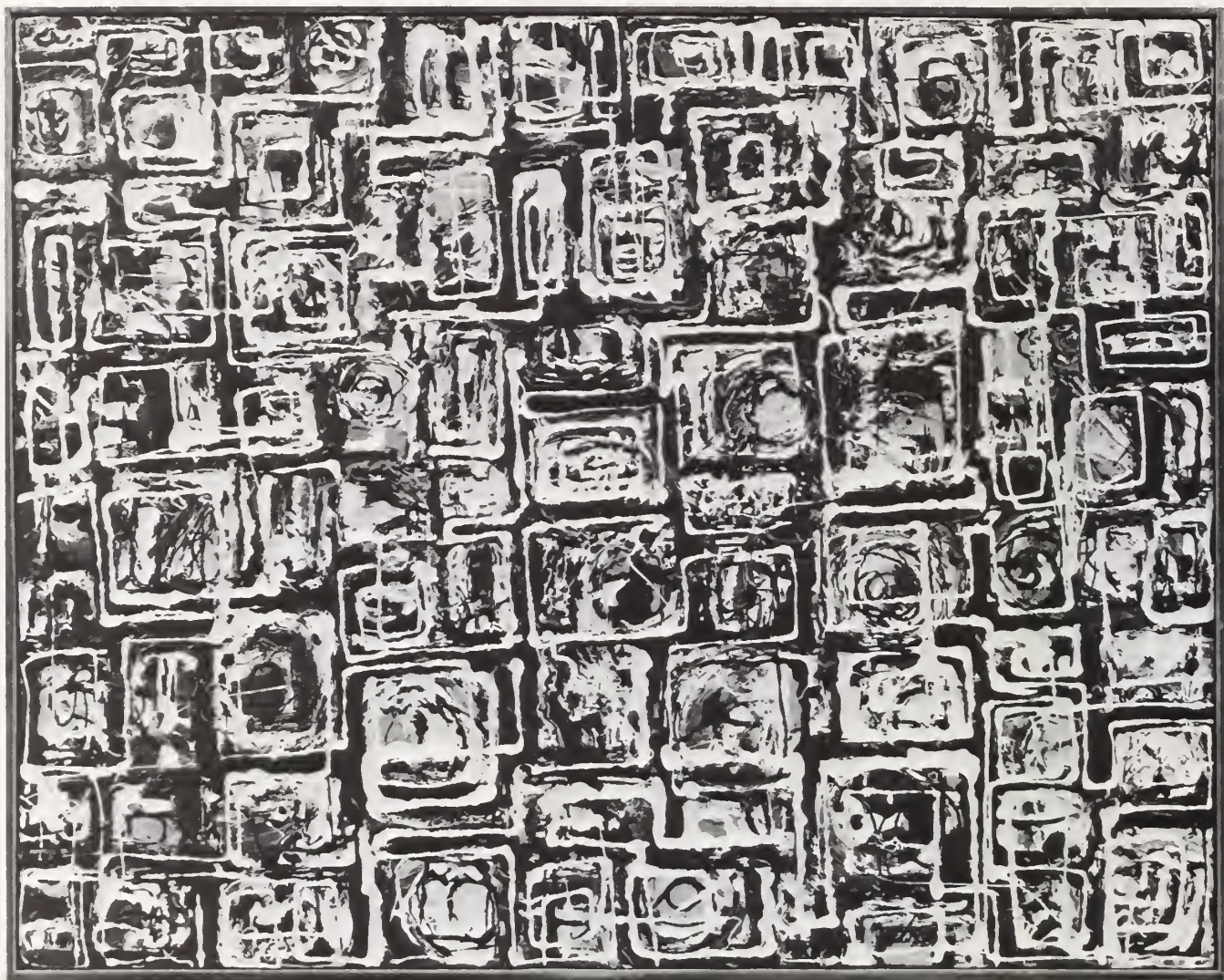


ADOLPH LOEY (1916-1974)

Abstract Composition, 1954

Oil on Canvas, 12 x 72 inches

Gift of the Board and Dorothy Proctor Fund, 1972



LEE KRASNER (1908–1984)

White Squares, c. 1948

Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 inches

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Friedman 75.1



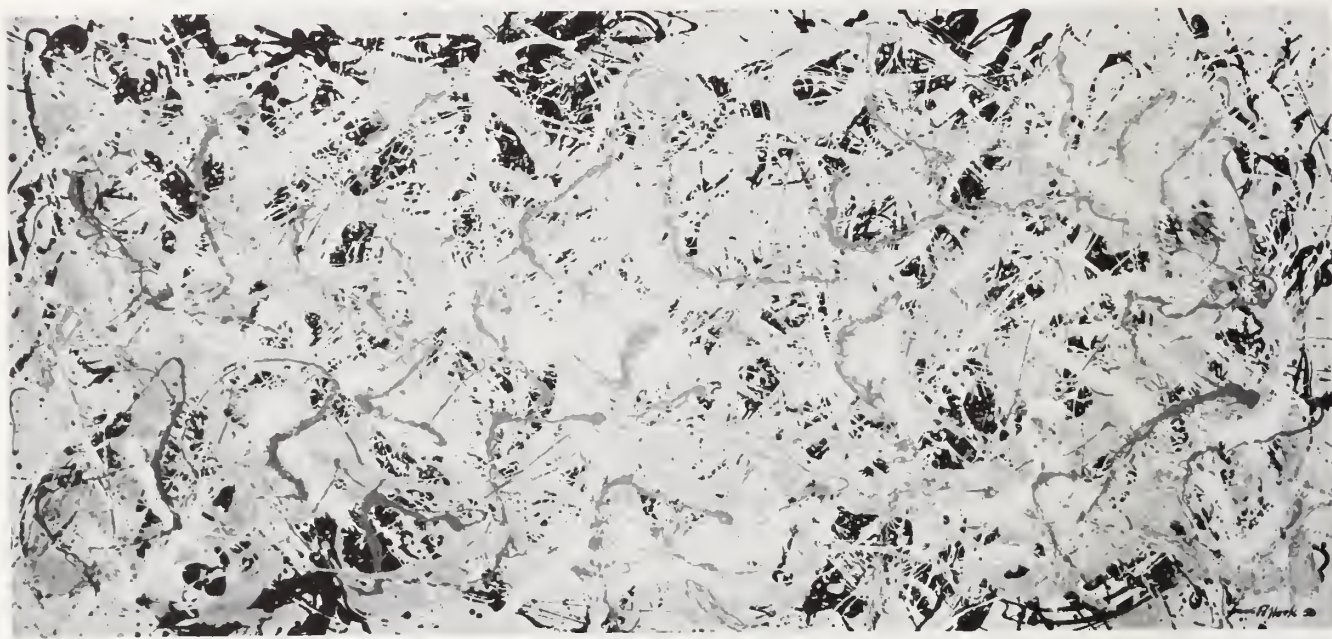
BRADLEY WALKER TOMLIN (1899-1950)

Owl on a branch (1947-1948)

Oil on canvas, 32 x 31 inches

Gift of Abby and E. H. Friedman in honor of

John H. Baird. B6.5.5



JACKSON POLLOCK (1912–1956)

Number 27, 1950

Oil on canvas, 49 x 106 inches

Purchase 53.12

(not in the exhibition)



MARK TOBEY (1892-1976)
New Life/Resurrection, 1950
 Tempera on cardboard, 40 1/2 x 27 1/2 inches
 Purchase with fund from the Friends of the
 Whitney Museum of American Art, 1970



AD REINHARDT (1913–1967)

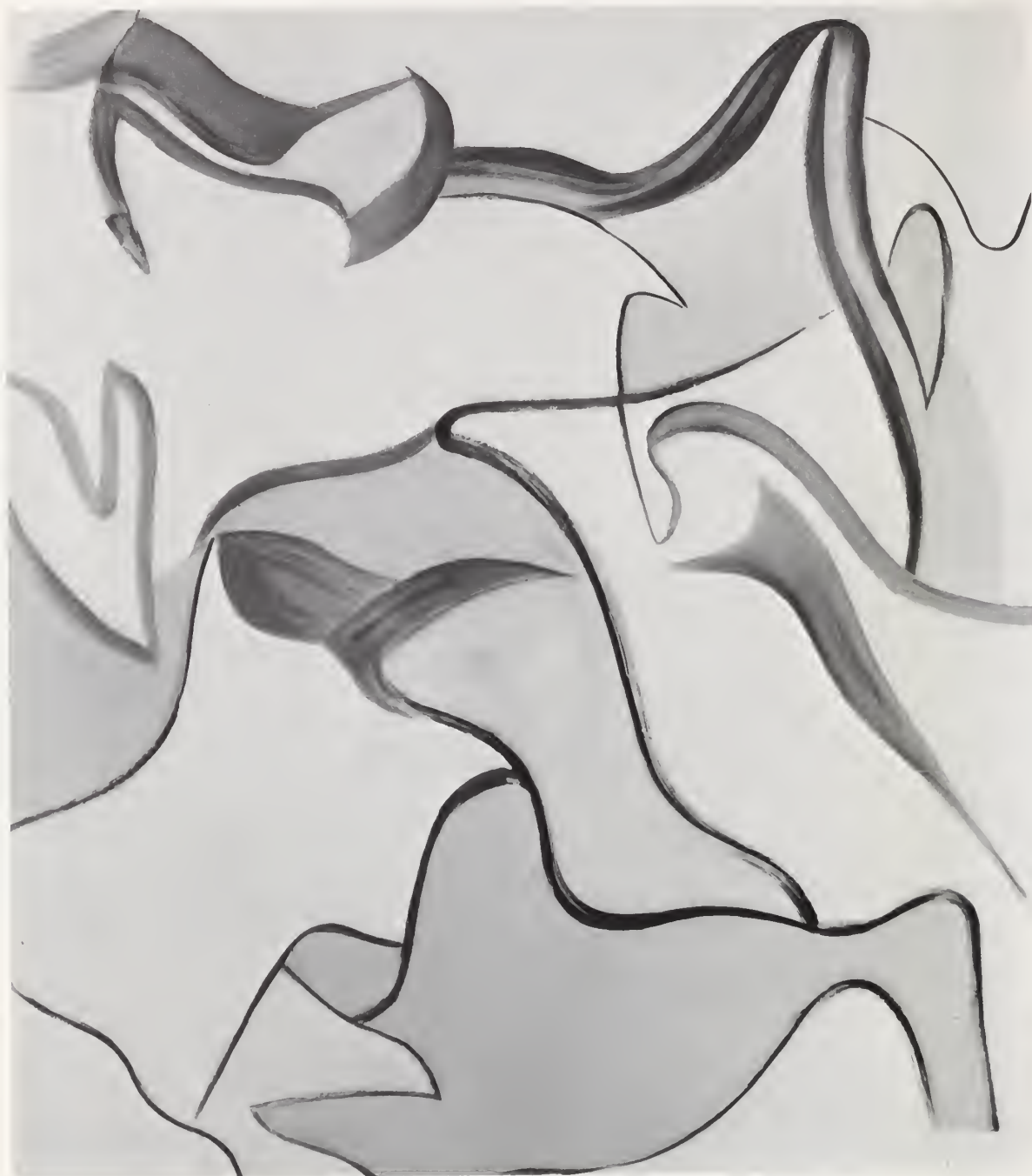
Number 18—1948–49, 1948–49

Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 inches

Purchase 53.13



HANS HOFMANN (1889-1966)
Field of Blue, 1924
Oil on canvas, 60 x 52 inches
Purchase with fund from the Friends of the
Whitney Museum of American Art, 1972

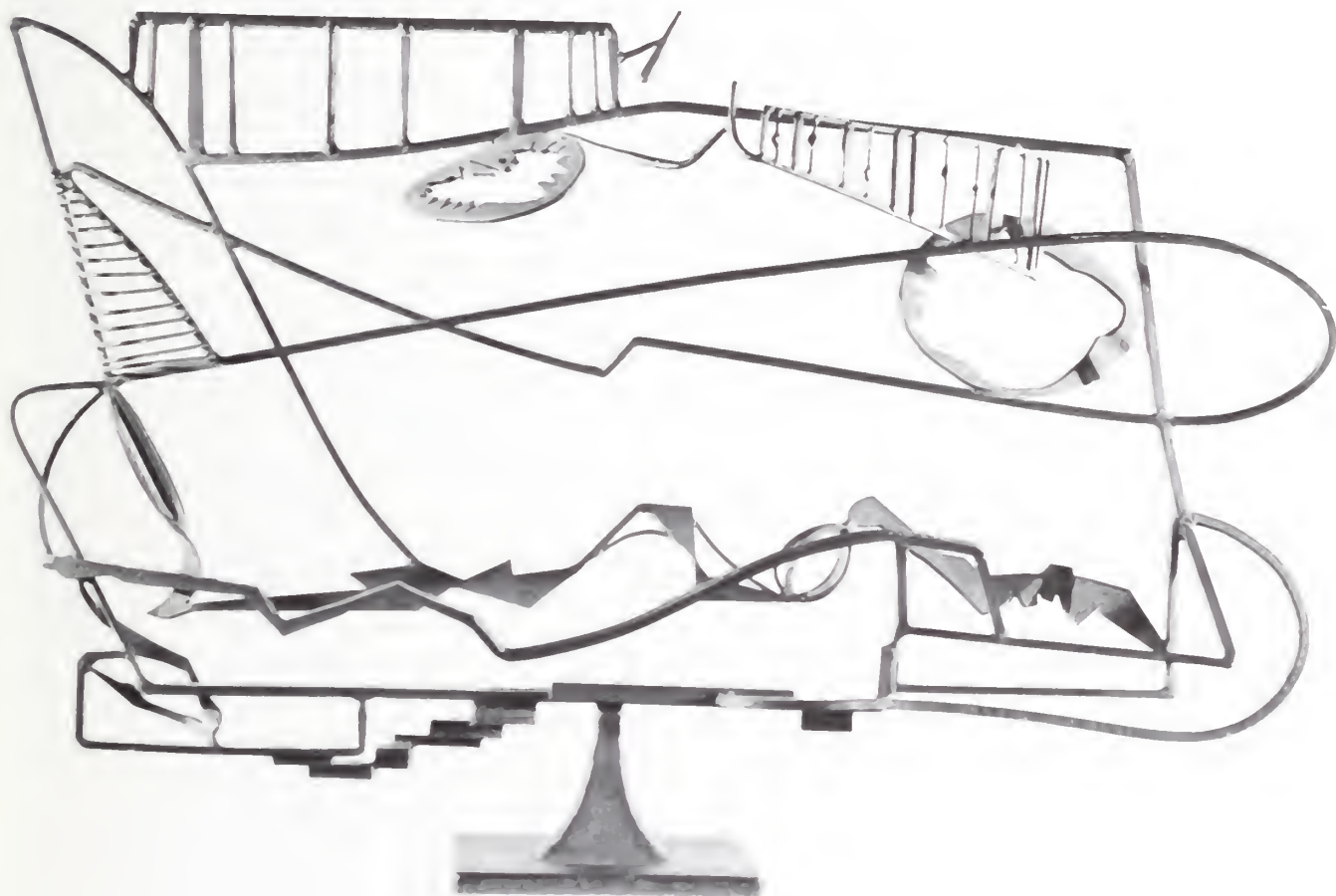


WILLEM DE KOONING (b. 1904)

Untitled VII, 1983

Oil on canvas, 80 x 70 inches

Partial and promised gift of Robert W Wilson P.4.84



DAVID SMITH (1906-1965)
Helen Park Loverside 1951
 Welded steel 49 1/2 x 72 x 16 inches
 Purchase: \$4.4
 Gift of the artist's estate



JOAN MITCHELL (b. 1926)

Hemlock, 1956

Oil on canvas, 91 x 80 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of
American Art \$8.20

(not in the exhibition)

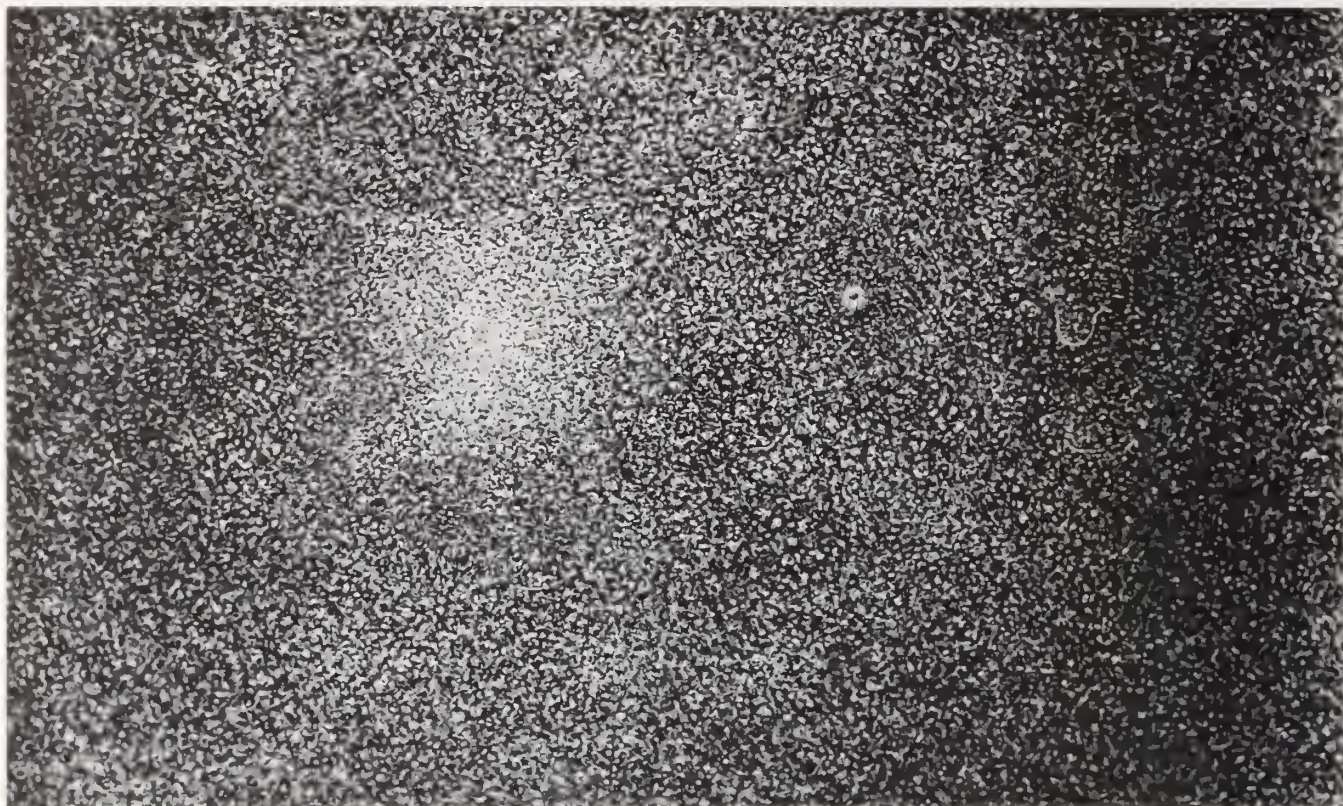


PHILIP GUSTON (19.3.1960)

Dec 1976

Onion Canvas 72 x 76 inches

Purchase 5644



RICHARD POUSETTE-DART (b. 1916)
Sky Presence (Morning), 1962–63
Oil on canvas, 43 x 71 inches
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the
Whitney Museum of American Art 63.53



RICHARD ANUSZYK, *INNER PEACE* (1960)

Inner Peace, 1960

Oil on canvas, 22 x 16 inches

Gift of Governor and Mrs. Nelson A. Rockefeller

Inventory of John H. Blair, 7457

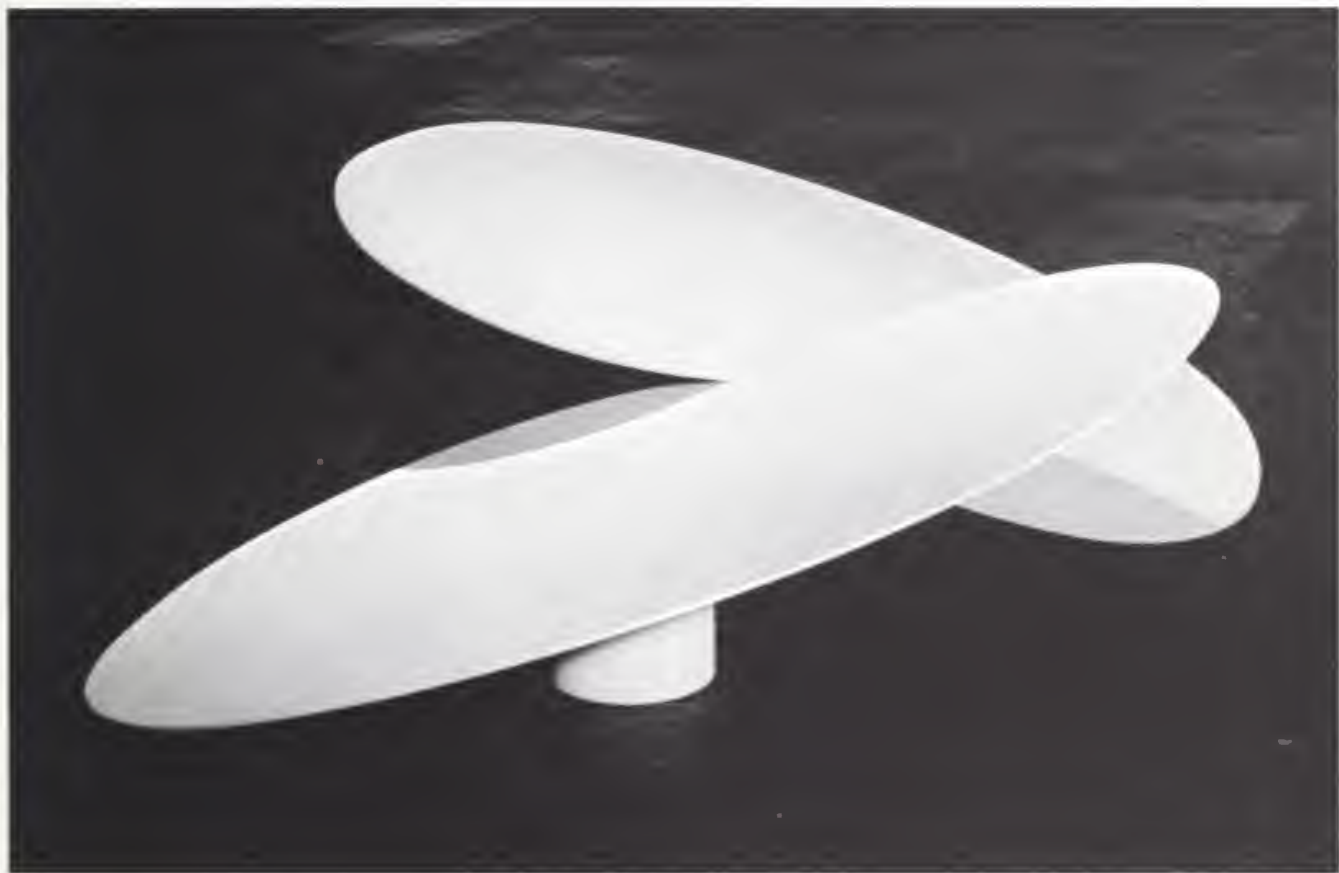


LARRY POONS (b. 1937)

Untitled, 1966

Synthetic polymer on canvas, 130 x 90 inches

Purchase 66.84

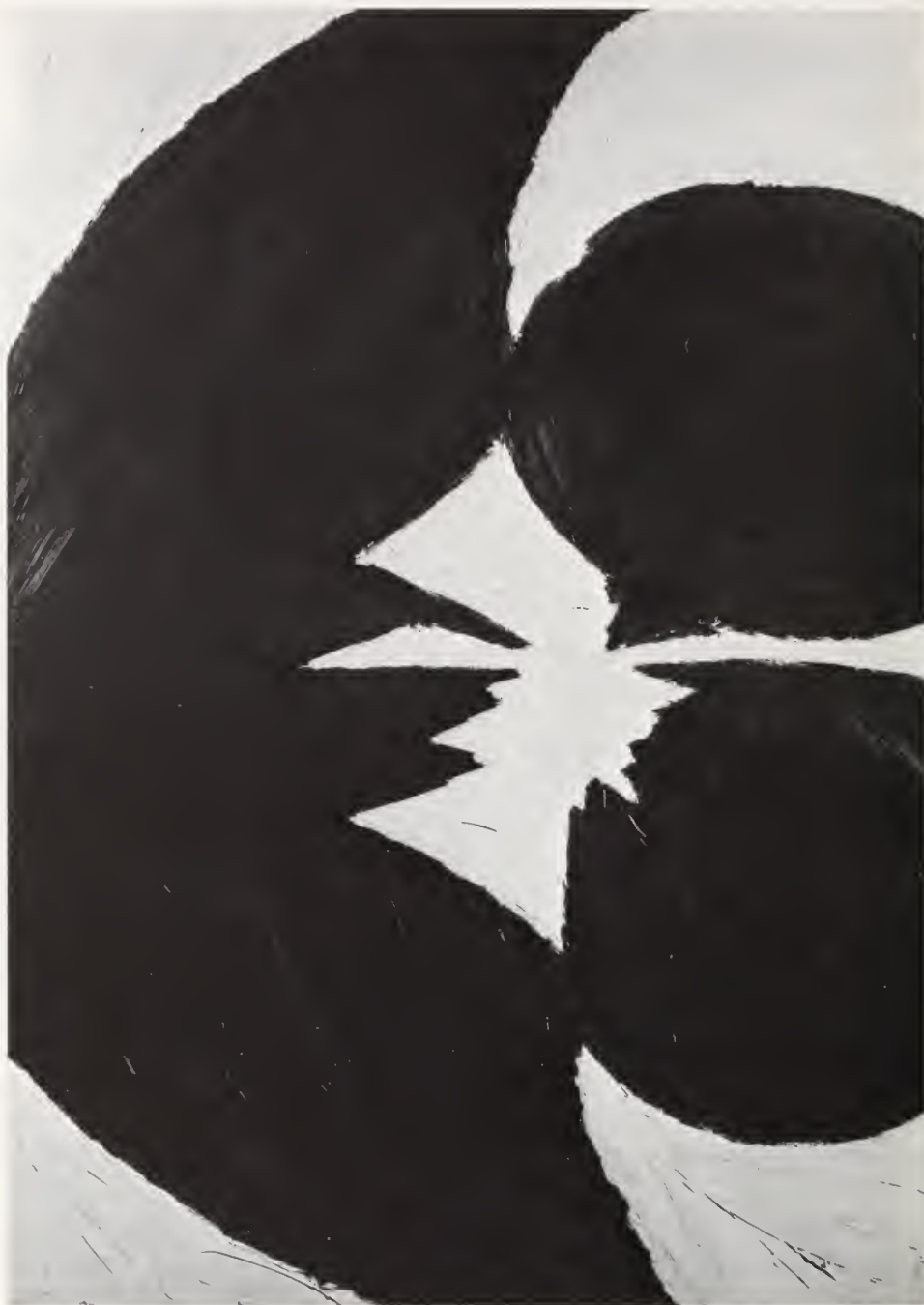


ELLSWORTH KELLY (b. 1923)

White 1963

Painted aluminum, 21 x 70 1/2 x 10 1/2 inches

Purchase with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation Inc. As 41



JACK YOUNGERMAN (b. 1926)

Red White, 1958

Oil on canvas, 70 x 50 inches

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Morton J. Hornick 84.63



MYRON STOUT (b. 1908)

Untitled (Wind Borne Egg), 1959, 80

Oil on canvas, 26 x 20 inches

Purchase with funds from the Mrs. Percy L. H. Purchase Fund, 85.42



GEORGE SUGARMAN (b. 1912)

Criss-Cross, 1963

Painted wood, 40½ x 33½ x 37¼ inches

Lawrence H. Bloedel Bequest 77.1.51

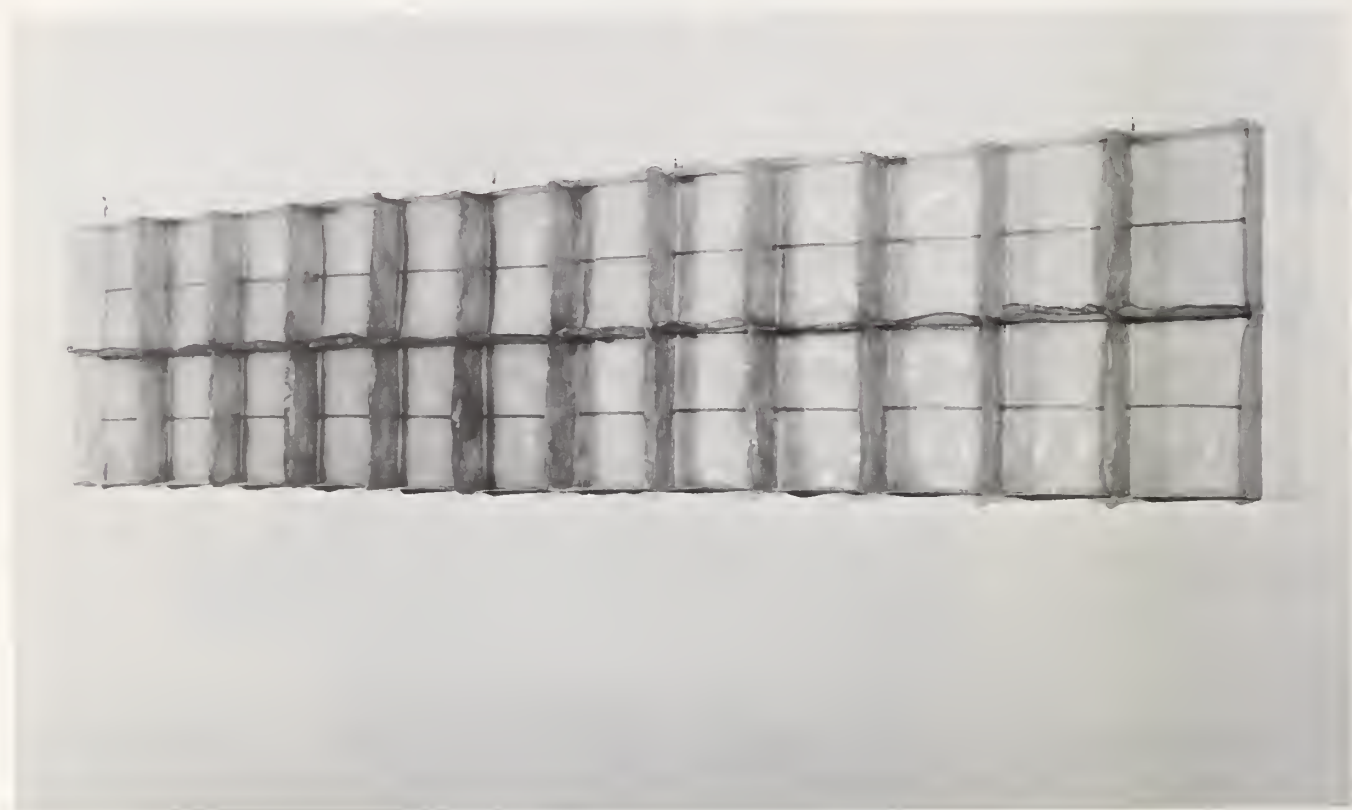


JOHN CHAMBERLAIN (b. 1927)

Pyramide (1960-1961)

Steel automobile parts (11 x 17 1/2 x 23 inches)

Pyramide, with a gift from the Howard W. and Jean S. Foundation, Inc., and gift 46.18



EVA HESSE (1936–1970)

Sans II, 1968

Fiberglass, 38 x 170 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches

Purchase, with funds from Dr. and Mrs. Lester J. Honig and the
Albert A. List Family 69.105

(not in the exhibition)



LARRY BELL b 1949

Untitled 1967

Mixed media and painted wood on plywood
20 x 20 x 20 inches

Gift of Howard and Jeanne Perry, 1983.8



ROBERT SMITHSON (1938–1973)

Ion-site (Palisades, Edgewater, N.J.), 1968

Painted aluminum, enamel, and stone, 56 × 26 × 36 inches

Map and Description of Site

Ink on paper: map, 1 1/2 × 2 inches, description, 7 1/8 × 9 1/4 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 69.6a–b



LYNDA BENGLIS (b. 1941)

Bravo 2, 1975–76

Copper, steel, tin, and zinc on plaster, cotton bunting,
and aluminum screen, 52 x 21 x 30 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Burroughs Wellcome Purchase Fund and
the Neysa McMein Purchase Award 81.13

Polymers with free-flowing H₂ and (H₂)₂ are (P₁ and P₂) (Table 1).



JACKIE WINSOR (b. 1941)

Bound Logs, 1972–73

Wood and hemp, 114 × 29 × 18 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 74.53

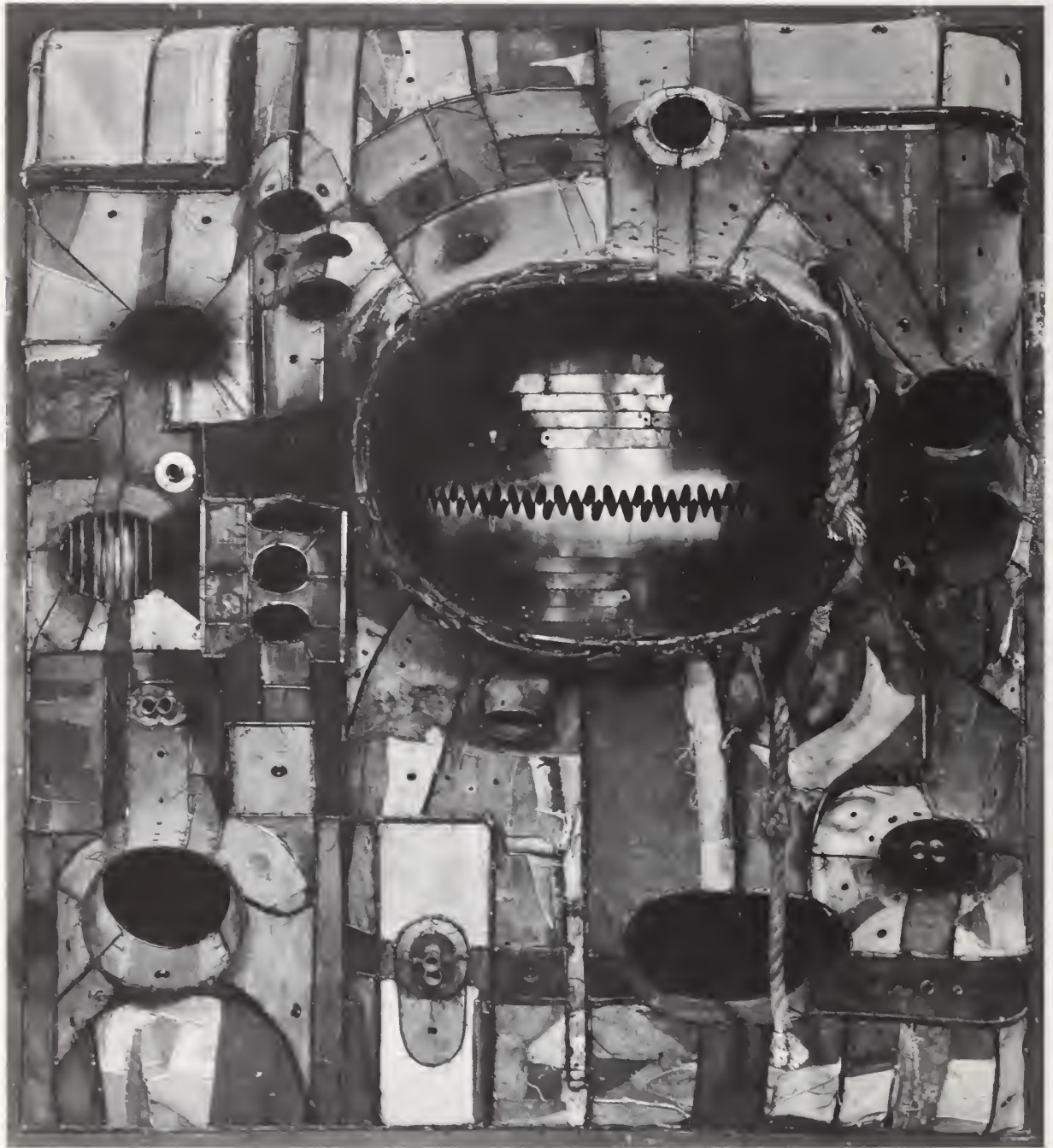


GLORIA (TAMARA), 1996

Gift of the artist to the Howard and Kunkin Foundation

Plaster, wire, and paper, 22" x 22" x 22" (H x W x D)

Photo: with kind permission of the Howard and Kunkin Foundation, Inc. (NY)

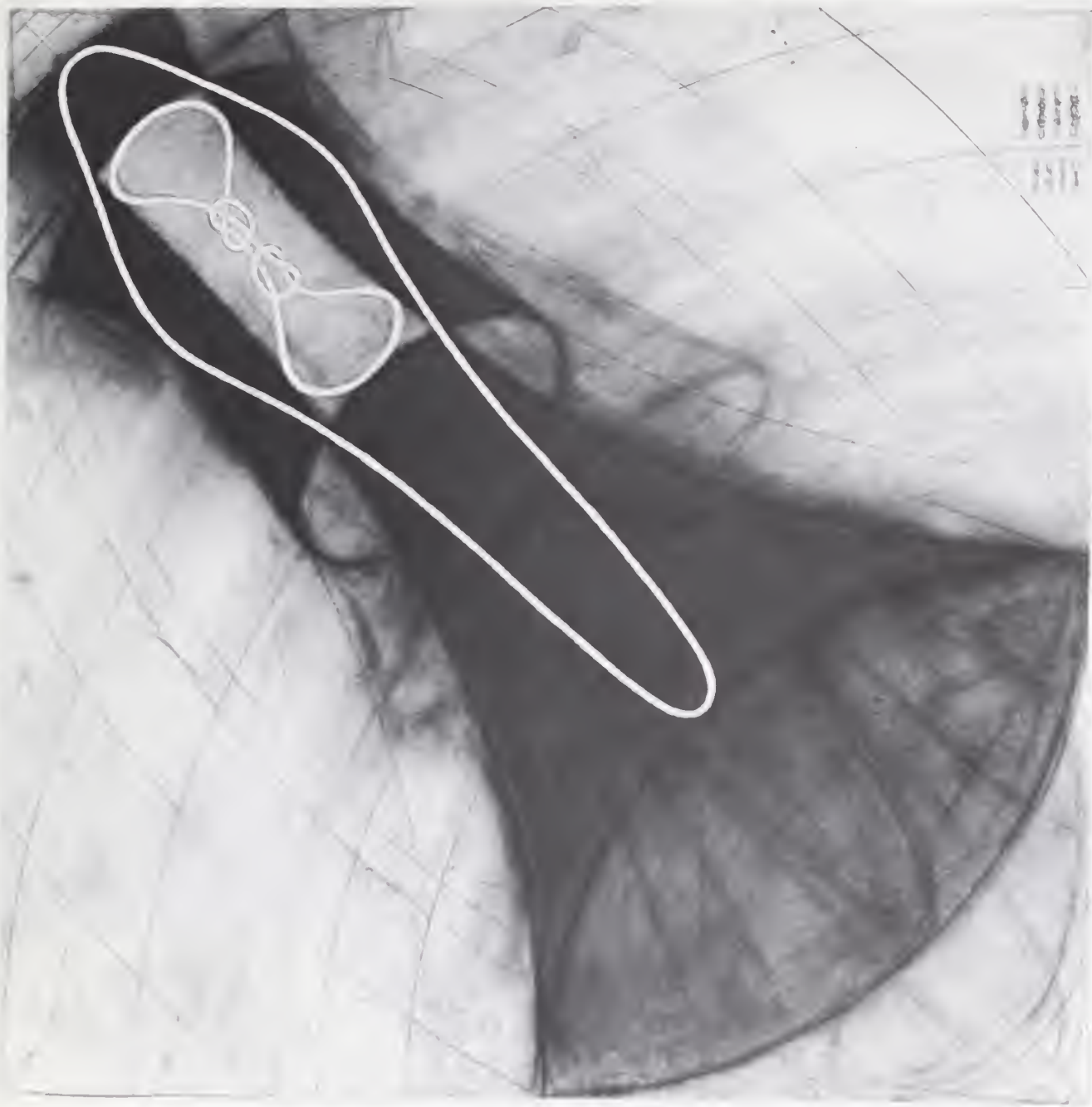


LEE BONTECOU (b. 1931)

Untitled, 1961

Welded metal and canvas, 72 x 66¼ x 26 inches

Purchase 61.41



JOHN NEWMAN (b. 1921)

Drawing, 1962

Graphite, color, charcoal, ink, and pencil on paper

60 x 60 1/2 inches

Part of a series of drawings by Newman, 1962, in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York



TERRY WINTERS (b. 1949)

Good Government, 1984

Oil on linen, 101 1/4 x 136 1/4 inches

Purchase, with funds from The Mnuchin Foundation and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 85.15

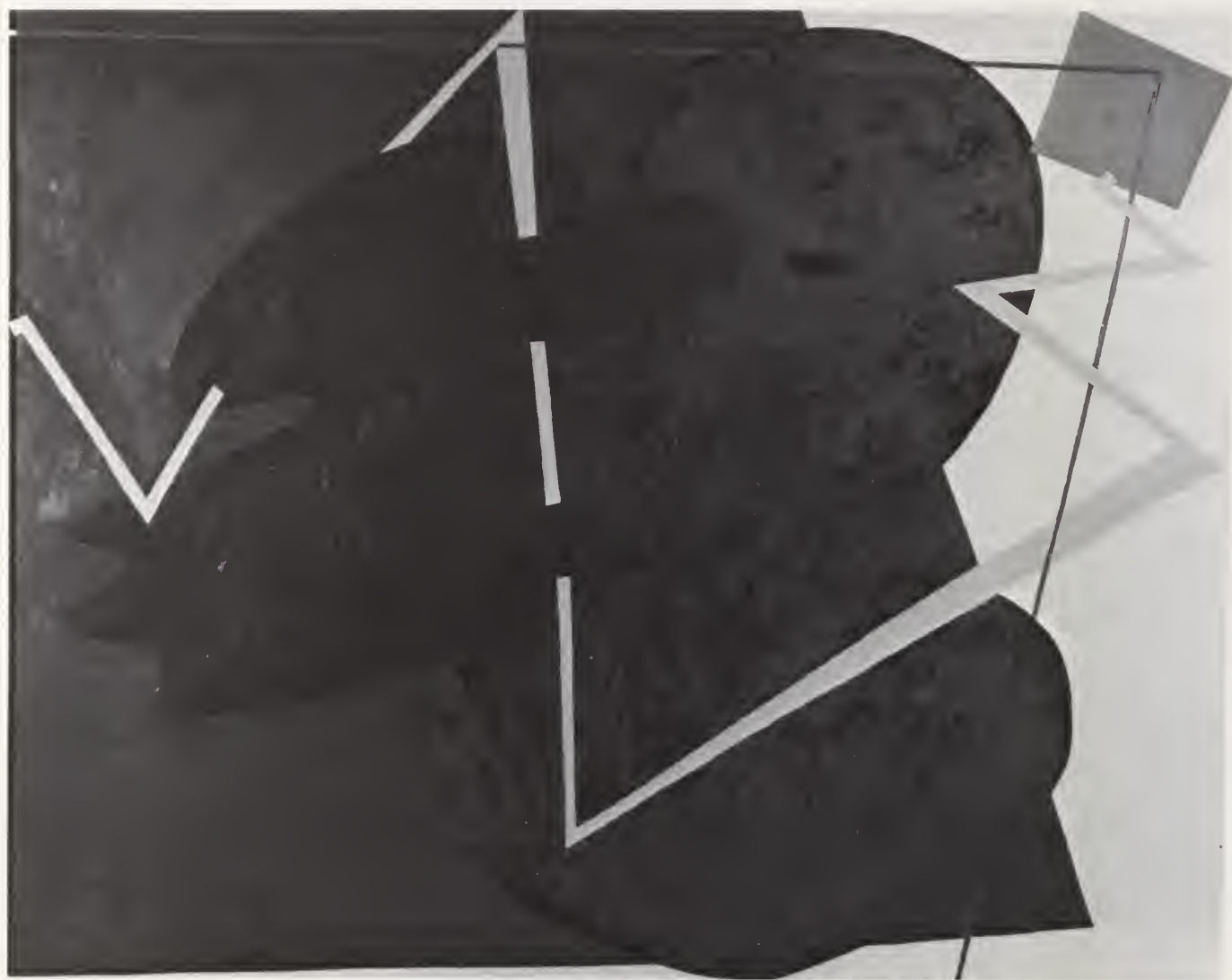


SCULPTURE (1997)

Wood (1997)

Dimensions: 54 in. x 16 in. x 16 in. (137 cm)

Part of a series of sculptures by the artist, titled "The Three" (1997)



ELIZABETH MURRAY (b. 1940)

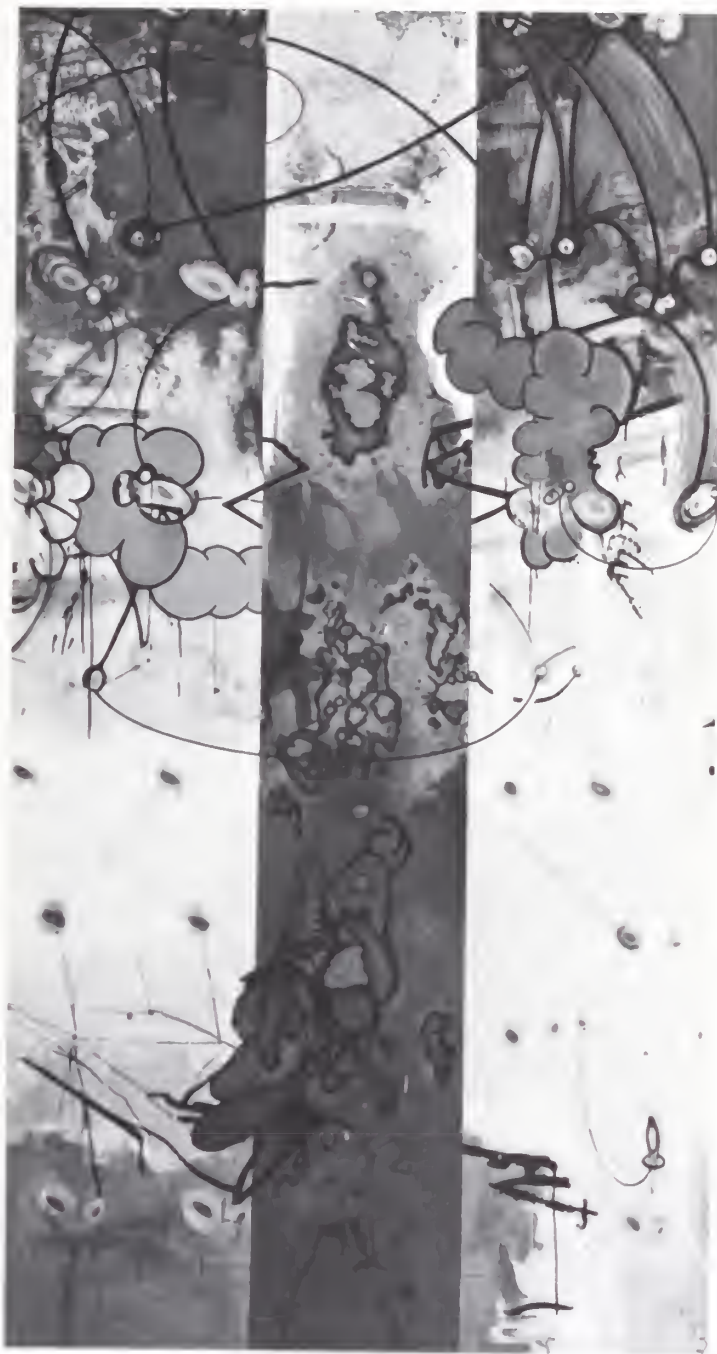
Children Meeting, 1978

Oil on canvas, 101 x 127 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Louis and Bessie Adler Foundation, Inc.,

Seymour M. Klein, President 78.34

(not in the exhibition)

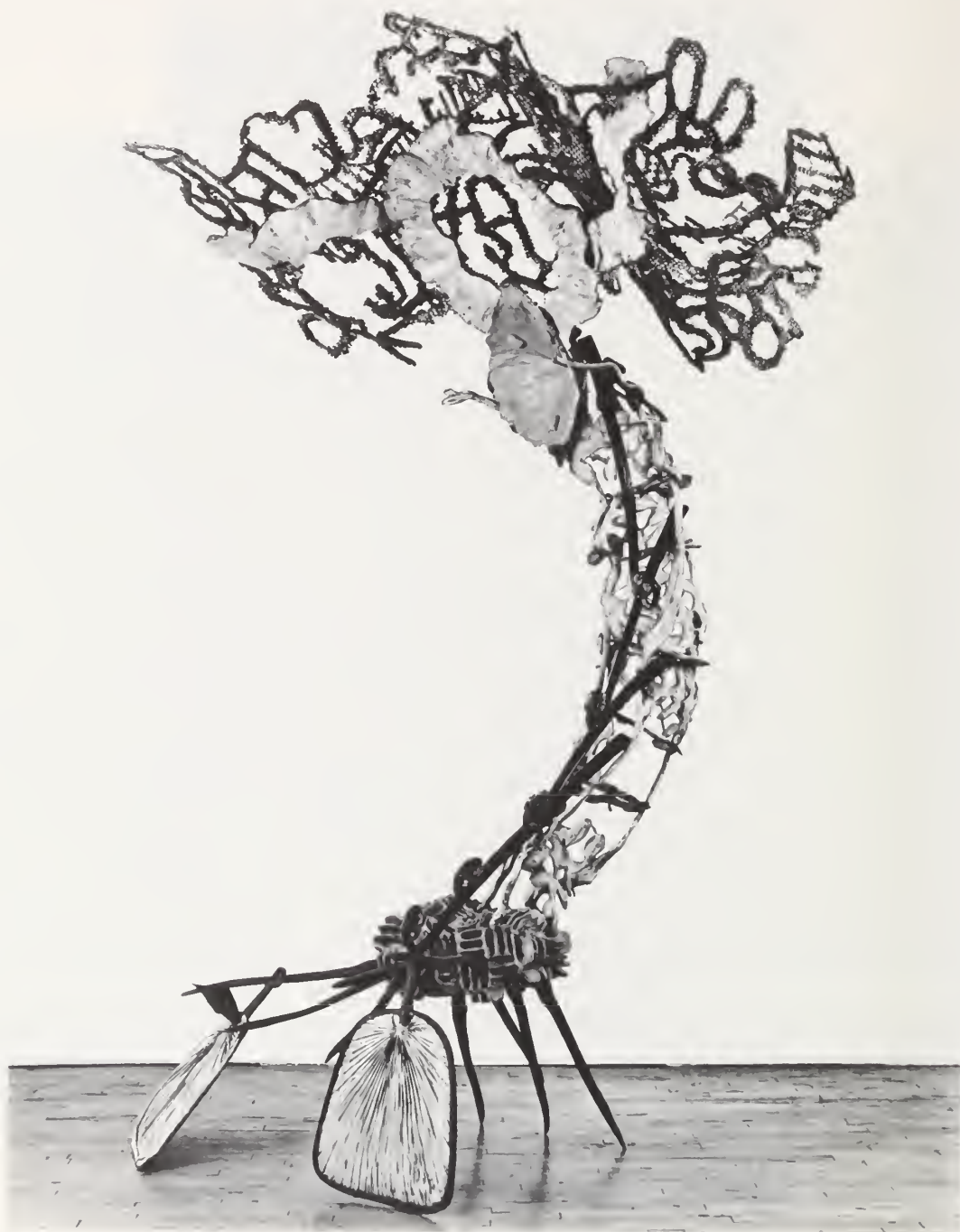


CARROLL DUNHAM (b. 1949)

Untitled (RE 126)

Mixed media on wood veneer (77 x 4) inches

Portfolio with funds from The Museum Foundation RE 16



NANCY GRAVES (b. 1940)

Cantileve, 1983

Bronze with polychrome patina, 98 x 68 x 54 inches

Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 83.39

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Works in the Exhibition

Dimensions are in inches; height precedes width precedes depth. Sight refers to measurements taken within the frame or flat opening.

GREGORY AMENOFF (b. 1948)
Gnarls 1987

Color woodcut 42 7/8 x 37 1/2
Purchase with funds from the Richard and Dorothy Rodgers Fund 87.56

RICHARD ANUSZKIEWICZ (b. 1930)
Inner Red c. 1960

Oil on canvas 22 x 18
Gift of Governor and Mrs. Nelson A. Rockefeller
in honor of John H. Baur 74.57

WILLIAM BAZ OTES (1912–1963)
The Beach 1955

Oil on canvas 36 x 48
Purchase 56.12

HAPPY BELL (b. 1939)
Untitled 1967

Mineral-coated glass and mosaic-painted brass
20 x 20 x 20
Gift of Howard and Jean Upman 80.38

LYNDA BIRNGLITZ (b. 1941)
Bravo! 1975–76

Copper plate, tin and zinc embossed, etched,
burned and drawn on paper 52 x 21 x 10
Purchase with funds from the Howard and
Jean Upman Purchase Fund and the Nevada State
Purchase Award 81.17

FORREST BAYLY (1911–1977)
Drawing 1957

Oil on canvas 8 x 25
Gift of Betty Parsons 82.11

CHARLES BITTERMAN (b. 1906)
Painting New York (interior) 1936–1938

Oil on canvas 51 1/2 x 18 1/2
1938 Anniversary Gift of the Board of Trustees
Painting and Sculpture from the Wilfred and
Robert Cohen Foundation Inc. 80.17

LEE BONTE COLE (b. 1941)
Untitled 1966

Waxed metal and paper 52 x 66 1/2 x 2 1/2
Purchase 61.41

LOUISE BOURGEOIS (b. 1917)
One and One 1952

Painted wood 18 1/2 x 28 x 18 1/2
Purchase 58.81

ALEXANDER CALDER (1898–1976)
Calderberry Bush 1932

Painted steel rod, wire, wood and sheet
aluminum; dimensions variable; approximate
88 1/2 x 33 x 47 1/2
Purchase with funds from the Mrs. Percival
Purchase Fund 86.49

Wooden Bottle with Hairs 1943

Wood and wire 22 x 14 x 16 1/2
50th Anniversary Gift of the Howard and Jean
Upman Foundation Inc. 80.28.2

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN (b. 1927)
Untitled 1963–1965

Steel automobile parts 31 x 37 1/2 x 28
Purchase with funds from the Howard and Jean
Upman Foundation Inc. and gift 66.18

JOHN COVERT (1892–1960)
Roughman 1916

Oil on oak plywood board 25 1/2 x 21 1/2
Gift of Charles Smol 64.18

WILLIAM DE KROMING (b. 1914)
Untitled 1955

Oil on canvas 81 x 70
Acrylic and oil on canvas 11 x 50 1/2 x 11 1/2
Purchase 84.84

ARTHUR DOWNTON (1880–1942)
Roughman 1916

Paint on canvas 17 1/2 x 21 1/2
Purchase with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Ray
R. Doolittle 51.20

Untitled Sculpture 1942

Oil on canvas 25 x 14 1/2
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Waxman 85.77

CARROLL DUNHAM (b. 1904)
Red Girl 1970–80

Mark and marks on waxed paper 17 x 11
Purchase with funds from The Margaret
Foundation 86.76

JOHN FARBER (1902–1970)
Constitution Green 1966

Oil on canvas 29 x 19 1/2
Purchase with funds from the Board of the
Whitney Museum of American Art 80.3

ARSHILE GORKY (1904–1948)
Study for Summer 1946

Pen and wash 19 1/2 x 25 1/2
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wolfgang
S. Schwabach 80.86

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB (1903–1974)
Artist's Side Landscape 1956

Oil on canvas 42 x 72
Gift of the Richard and Dorothy Rodgers Fund
75.32

NANCY GRAVES (b. 1940)
Cathieve 1983

Bronze with polychrome patina 98 x 68 x 54
Purchase with funds from the Painting and
Sculpture Committee 83.39

PHILIP GUSTON (1913–1980)
Dirt 1956

Oil on canvas 72 x 76
Purchase 56.44

MICHAEL HEIZER (b. 1944)
45 75 (NO. #1) 1981

Volcanic lava and weathering steel; three
elements: 45 element 65 1/2 x 49 x 51 1/2, with
base 50 element 65 1/2 x 47 x 16 1/2, with base
75 element 35 x 51 1/2 x 56, with base
Gift of Xavier Foundation in memory of
Sam Waggoner 87.44a–c

HANS HOFMANN (1880–1966)
Garten 1880–1954

Oil on canvas 81 x 52
Purchase with funds from the Friends of the
Whitney Museum of American Art 87.21

BRYAN HUNT (b. 1947)
Untitled 1978

Bronze 14 1/2 x 12 x 12
Purchase with funds from Edward R.
Powell 87.68

BILL HARTNETT (b. 1941)
The Mother 1983–8

Oil on canvas 22 x 22
Purchase with funds from the Wilfred and
Robert Cohen Foundation Inc. 81.16

ILLUSTRATION (b. 1920)
White 1961

Painted aluminum 21 x 60 x 100
Purchase with funds from the Howard and
Jean Upman Foundation Inc. 68.47

ROBERT H. KISLER (1896–1967)
Dance 1963

Bronze, wood, bone, ivory and painted
8 1/2 x 20 x 11
Purchase gift of Howard and Jean Upman
83.80

LEE KRAŠNER (1908–1984)

White Squares, c. 1948
Oil on canvas, 24 x 30
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Friedman 75.1

IBRAM LAŠSAW (b. 1913)

Sculpture in Steel, 1938
Steel, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 15
Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 86.11

ROBERT LAURENT (1890–1970)

The Flame, c. 1917
Wood, 18 high
Gift of Mr. Bartlett Arkell 42.1

MICHAEL LEKAKIS (1907–1987)

Sympan, 1960
Oak, 85 x 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{8}$, with base
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 61.33

ALICE TRUMBULL MASON (1904–1971)

Free White Spacing, 1939
Oil on linen, 22 x 27 $\frac{1}{4}$
Gift of Emily and Wolf Kahn 75.49

GEORGE L. K. MORRIS (1905–1975)

Configuration, 1936
Bronze, 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Gift of Mr. Jerry Leiber 81.39

Indian Concretion, 1938

Oil on canvas, 45 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 36 $\frac{1}{8}$
Gift of Mr. Jerry Leiber 84.70.1

JOHN NEWMAN (b. 1952)

Untitled, 1986
Graphite, pastel, charcoal, chalk, and conté on paper, 60 x 60 $\frac{1}{16}$
Purchase, with funds from Mr. and Mrs. William A. Marsteller 86.20

ISAMU NOGUCHI (b. 1904)

The Ring, 1945–48
Black granite, 12 x 22 x 22
Gift of the artist 69.106

Humpty Dumpty, 1946

Ribbon slate, 58 $\frac{3}{4}$ high
Purchase 47.7

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE (1887–1986)

Abstraction, 1926
Oil on canvas, 30 x 18
Purchase 58.43

JACKSON POLLOCK (1912–1956)

Untitled, c. 1950
Ink on paper, 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 22 $\frac{1}{8}$
Gift of an anonymous donor 74.129

LARRY POONS (b. 1937)

Untitled, 1966
Synthetic polymer on canvas, 130 x 90
Purchase 66.84

RICHARD POUSETTE-DART (b. 1916)

Sky Presence (Morning), 1962–63
Oil on canvas, 43 x 71
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 63.53

MARTIN PURYEAR (b. 1941)

Sanctum, 1985
Wood, wire mesh, and tar, 76 x 109 x 87
Purchase, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee 85.72

AD REINHARDT (1913–1967)

Number 18—1948–49, 1948–49
Oil on canvas, 40 x 60
Purchase 53.13

THEODORE ROSZAK (1907–1981)

Thorn Blossom, 1948
Steel and nickel-silver, 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ high
Purchase 48.6

MARK ROTHKO (1903–1970)

Baptismal Scene, 1945
Watercolor on paper, 19 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 14 (sight)
Purchase 46.12

Entombment, I, 1946

Gouache on paper, 20 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{3}{4}$
Purchase 47.10

LUCAS SAMARAS (b. 1936)

Chair Transformation Number 8, 1969–70
Plaster, cloth, wire, and tinfoil, 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 22 x 22
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 70.1571

ALAN SARET (b. 1944)

True Jungle: Canopy Forest, 1968
Painted wire, dimensions variable, 108 x 216 x 48
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 69.7

DAVID SMITH (1906–1965)

Untitled, 1951
Ink and tempera on paper, 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 25 $\frac{3}{4}$
Promised 50th Anniversary Gift of an anonymous donor P.7.79

ROBERT SMITHSON (1938–1973)

Non-site (Palisades, Edgewater, N.J.), 1968
Painted aluminum, enamel, and stone, 56 x 26 x 36. Map and Description of Site:
Ink on paper: map, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 2; description, 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 69.6a–b

JOSEPH STELLA (1877–1946)

Tropical Sonata, 1920–21
Oil on canvas, 48 x 29
Purchase 63.63

CLYFFORD STILL (1904–1980)

Untitled, 1945
Oil on canvas, 42 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 33 $\frac{5}{8}$
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Friedman 69.3

MYRON STOUT (b. 1908)

Untitled (Wind Borne Egg), 1959–80
Oil on canvas, 26 x 20
Purchase, with funds from the Mrs. Percy Uris Purchase Fund 85.42

GEORGE SUGARMAN (b. 1912)

Cross-Cross, 1963
Painted wood, 40 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 37 $\frac{1}{4}$
Lawrence H. Bloedel Bequest 77.1.51

YVES TANGUY (1900–1955)

The Wish, 1949
Oil on canvas, 36 x 28
Kay Sage Tanguy Bequest 63.46

ROBERT THERRIEN (b. 1947)

No Title, 1985
Tin on bronze, 34 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$
Purchase, with funds from the Eli Broad Family Foundation 86.33

MARK TOBEY (1890–1976)

New Life (Resurrection), 1957
Tempera on cardboard, 45 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{1}{4}$
Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 59.13

BRADLEY WALKER TOMLIN (1899–1953)

Number 2—1950, 1950
Oil on canvas, 54 x 42
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller in honor of John I. H. Baur 81.8

JACKIE WINSOR (b. 1941)

Bound Logs, 1972–73
Wood and hemp, 114 x 29 x 18
Purchase, with funds from the Howard and Jean Lipman Foundation, Inc. 74.53

TERRY WINTERS (b. 1949)

Good Government, 1984
Oil on linen, 101 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 136 $\frac{1}{4}$
Purchase, with funds from The Mnuchin Foundation and the Painting and Sculpture Committee 85.15

JACK YOUNGERMAN (b. 1926)

Red White, 1958
Oil on canvas, 70 x 50
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Morton J. Hornick 84.63

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